

59.Mampu Agroforestry system in DRC:

Is it sustainable and can it be a model for large scale plantations?

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The hundreds of thousands of hectares of savannah of the Plateau des Bateke, situated around the megacity of Kinshasa (capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo) offers a promising perspective on the development of agriculture and forestry. Several projects have been initiated in the area, among them the Mampu Project in which 308 farmers are developing an agroforestry system of fallow land based on the traditional cultivation method of slash-and-burn to manage 8000 hectares of planted *Acacia auriculiformis*. The impact of the agroforestry system on the living conditions of the farmers and their surroundings is remarkable. However, the durability of the system is jeopardized by some poor agroforestry practices and a lack of social cohesion necessary for the management of brush fires (or maybe “controlled burning”). In addition, despite the beneficial effects of *Acacia* on the level of nitrogen the nutrient assessment of the soil threatens the viability of the system due to a lack of measurement of the fertility management of the soil. A decrease in the yield of the cultivated land as well as the acacias is observed in the second crop rotation. Although the Mampu Project is promising, technical and social modifications would be desirable for sustainable replication on a large scale.

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